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TITLE: The Unsafe Sexual Behavior of Persons Living with HIV/AIDS: An Empirical Approach to Developing New HIV Prevention Interventions Targeting HIV-positive Persons.

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BACKGROUND/OBJECTIVES: This study aims to examine the psychosexual concerns of persons living with HIV in order to develop new HIV prevention interventions.

METHODS: In all, 106 persons living with HIV/AIDS in Minnesota completed an anonymous survey that examined risk behavior at time of infection, pre-diagnosis, post-diagnosis, psychosexual concerns related to infection of others and living with HIV and prevention services desired by persons living with HIV. The sample reflected the Minnesotan profile and represents 3.3% of known infections.

RESULTS: Most participants knew the person who infected them; half were infected by long-term partners; and 29% infected outside Minnesota. Median time from infection to diagnosis was three years, and from diagnosis to receiving HIV-clinical services, one month. Suicidal thoughts, shutting down sexually, safer sex, and unprotected sex with HIV positive individuals were common post-diagnosis behaviors. Twelve common reasons why persons became infected were cited. Since diagnosis, 24% reported unprotected anal or vaginal intercourse with a non-HIV positive partner; 37% reported infecting others prior to being diagnosed, and 13% infecting others post-diagnosis. Persons at high risk of transmitting HIV to others were younger ($X^2=11.39$; $p<.0001$), more sexually active ($X^2=7.58-21.23$; $p<.001$), more sexually compulsive ($X^2=3.50$; $p<.05$), less disclosing of their HIV serostatus before sex ($X^2=19.42$; $p<.0001$), more self-perception as contaminated ($X^2=7.48$, $p<.001$), more likely to report they became infected through oral sex ($X^2=7.56$; $p<.001$) and were aware that safer sex was problematic for them ($X^2=25.14$; $p<.0001$).

CONCLUSIONS: HIV prevention planning needs to target HIV positive persons. Eight specific recommendations are made for planning new interventions for persons living with HIV.

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